

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/TIMBS:DLFIELD,JR.:MCM
APPROVED BY EA - MR. OAKLEY
S/NM - MS. FALCO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 166778

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, BM, TH

SUBJECT: HEARINGS OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
NARCOTICS ABUSE AND CONTROL, JULY 12-13

BEGIN SUMMARY

OFFICIALS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE, THE DEPARTMENT, DEA AND
NIDA TESTIFIED DURING THE SUBJECT HEARINGS. CHAIRMAN
WOLFF QUESTIONED THE FORCEFULLNESS OF USG INTERNATIONAL
DRUG CONTROL PROGRAMS AND ASKED FOR THE ADMINISTRATION'S
VIEWS ON PREEMPTIVE BUYING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CURRENT
POLICIES. THE THRUST OF ADMINISTRATION TESTIMONY WAS TO
POINT OUT SHORTCOMINGS OF THE OPIUM PURCHASE SCHEME AND TO
EMPHASIZE THE INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL
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COOPERATION WITH THE GUB AND THE RTG AGAINST NARCOTICS
PRODUCERS AND TRAFFICKERS. TEXTS OF THE TESTIMONY ARE
BEING POUCHED TO ADDRESSEE POSTS.

END SUMMARY

1. THE TWO DAYS OF HEARINGS BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE

FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAMS IN THAILAND AND BURMA. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WOLFF REQUESTED ADMINISTRATION VIEWS ON THE PREEMPTIVE PURCHASE SCHEME AND INDICATED HIS CONCERN THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT BE MORE CONCERNED WITH GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE GUB THAN REDUCING THE SUPPLY OF HEROIN FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA.

2. DURING THE HEARINGS, STATEMENTS WERE MADE BY DR. PETER G. BOURNE, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF DRUG ABUSE POLICY; MS. MATHEA FALCO, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY AND COORDINATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS MATTERS; MR. ROBERT B. OAKLEY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS; MR. PETER B. BENSINGER, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION; AND DR. ROBERT L.

DUPONT, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE.

3. DURING HIS TESTIMONY, DR. BOURNE INDICATED STRONG ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT FOR CURRENT POLICIES AS FOLLOWS: BEGIN QUOTE. THE ADMINISTRATION IS STRONGLY COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT WITH WHOM WE MAINTAIN FRIENDLY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND COOPERATE WITH, IN DEALING WITH THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM. IT IS UNTHINKABLE THAT ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF THIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF INSURGENT GROUPS OPPOSED TO THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA, MUCH LESS USE THE AMERICAN

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TAXPAYERS DOLLARS FOR A PROGRAM THAT WOULD IN EFFECT PROVIDE A SUBSIDY FOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS AND ARMS FOR AN INSURRECTION. END QUOTE.

4. MS. FALCO EMPHASIZED OUR MULTIFACETED APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS UTILIZING COMPLEMENTARY COMPONENTS, AND OUTLINED THE GROWING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE EFFORT IN THE AREA, INCLUDING THE INCREASING INTEREST OF THE CANADIAN, AUSTRALIAN AND EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS IN CONTROLLING GOLDEN TRIANGLE NARCOTICS. SHE EMPHASIZED THE VALUE OF US-PROVIDED HELICOPTERS TO THE GUB AND RTG ANTI-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS, AND INDICATED OUR INTENTION TO ASSIGN AN AVIATION SPECIALIST TO RANGOON. ADDRESSING THE PREEMPTIVE PURCHASE SCHEME, MS. FALCO POINTED OUT THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD VIOLATE INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS; DAMAGE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; AND CONTRARY TO ALL INTENTIONS PROLONG AND EXPAND THE DRUG TRADE BY, IN EFFECT, ESTABLISHING A CROP SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR OPIUM.

5. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY HIGHLIGHTED THE APRIL BANGKOK NARCOTICS CONFERENCE, AND STATED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE NARCOTICS CONTROL A MAJOR ELEMENT

OF US FOREIGN POLICY. IN HIS TESTIMONY, HE ALSO STRESSED THE LONG-TERM IMPORTANCE OF CROP AND INCOME SUBSTITUTION, THE HUMAN RIGHTS VALUE OF WEAKENING THE CONTROL OF THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE WARLORD ARMIES AND BANDITS OVER THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA BY INTERRUPTING THE OPIUM TRADE, AND THE RECENTLY INCREASED THAI-BURMESE COOPERATION AGAINST

TRAFFICKING GROUPS. MR. OAKLEY, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON THE HELICOPTER INCIDENT, STATED THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THIS WILL PREJUDICE PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION.

6. MR. BENSINGER COVERED DEA OPERATIONS IN THAILAND IN MORE DETAIL AND POINTED TO THE SIGNIFICANT DROP IN OPIUM REACHING THE THAI BORDER THIS YEAR. DR. DUPONT DISCUSSED
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THE LOCAL ADDICT PROBLEM IN THAILAND AND BURMA, AND OUTLINED TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION EFFORTS IN BOTH COUNTRIES, INCLUDING US ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA.

7. THE OVERALL THRUST OF TESTIMONY BY ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS WAS TO EMPHASIZE THE EFFORTS AND SUCCESSES OF THE GUB AND RTG IN THEIR NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES, THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUED US ASSISTANCE TO THESE GOVERNMENTS AS APPROPRIATE TO OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS, AND THE INAPPROPRIATENESS OF PREEMPTIVE PURCHASE. WE BELIEVE THIS TESTIMONY SATISFIED THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT OUR CURRENT PROGRAMS IN THAILAND AND BURMA, ALTHOUGH NOT PERFECT, ARE PREFERABLE TO MORE RADICAL ALTERNATIVES. COMMITTEE MEMBERS MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THEIR BELIEF THAT OFTEN THE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT PURSUE DRUG CONTROL OBJECTIVES FORCEFULLY FOR FEAR OF DISTURBING OTHER MORE TRADITIONAL AREAS OF POLICY INTEREST, AND THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE NEED FOR BETTER COORDINATION AMONG THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE USG INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT.

8. WE ARE POUCHING THE FULL TEXTS OF TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE, AND WILL PROVIDE COMMITTEE PRINTS WHEN AVAILABLE. VANCE

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